



March 2007



EAGLE WATCH

NEWSLETTER

Virginia School for the Deaf, Blind and Multi-Disabled at Hampton

Preschoolers Love to Learn!

February has been a busy month for the preschoolers! We have been working hard to learn about community workers and time concepts. We love to sing "Hurry, Hurry!" (the fireman song), and recite the "Pat-a-cake Pizza Man" rhyme. Role-playing the various jobs and familiar routines was another favorite activity! We also enjoyed playing a variation of the "duck, duck, goose" game that incorporates several community workers. Chasing each other around the circle is so much fun! Skills in cutting, gluing and following direc-

tions were used as we created "fire" pictures.

Through-out it all we've practiced listening, answering "when" questions and using words such as: next, first, second, last, before, and after. We have also taken photographs of some of our morning school routines and have worked on sequencing the pictures and telling stories to go with the sequences. Finally, we have used sun and



Charlie Jerome, Kimora Smith, Ethan Jansen, Diamond Sutton, Nyla Shewmake, and Ari Hampton

moon stick puppets to answer questions such as: "When do we see the stars?" or "When do we eat lunch?" It's been busy, but a lot of fun. We're all looking forward to visiting some of these workers out in the community as a wonderful conclusion to our month-long study!

Foods to Encourage

OK, so you're going to eat healthy. But with all the choices out there, what does 'healthy' really mean?

You can start by making sure you include healthy foods at the top of your shopping list and work them into every day's meals. The 2005 *Dietary Guidelines* encourages increased intake of specific foods to help ensure that your diet is nutritionally sound.

- Get 3 servings of fat-free or low-fat dairy products every day. This could include an eight-



ounce glass of milk, an ounce and a half of cheese, or an eight-ounce container of yogurt.

- Make sure you get a variety of fruits and vegetables— at a minimum 2 cups of fruit and a 2½ cups of vegetables every day.
- Don't forget whole grains! Eat at least 3 ounces of whole grain products every day, and make sure the rest of your grains are either whole grain or enriched.

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"Hearts are Forever"

Hearts, balloons and a sea of people dressed in red, white and pink having a wonderful time...that's what you saw if you attended the 2007 Sweetheart Ball. This year's theme was "Hearts are Forever." A red and white balloon arch made the entrance to a fantastic night of dancing and fun. Everyone came dressed in the theme colors of red, white and pink. The tables were beautifully decorated in red and white tablecloths with red foil heart centerpieces and silk rose petals. Special musical guest, the talented Ms. Lauren Russell, thrilled the crowd with her versions of "Love" and "I Just Called to Say I Love You." Music and special effects lighting was provided by the Wizard of Sound DJ service, out of Virginia Beach. Angel Vega, our energetic DJ, got the party going and kept the party going, encouraging everyone to come on out to

the dance floor for some great fun including everyone's favorite: line dances!

After working up an appetite on the dance floor, attendees could make their way over to the buffet table, where our very own Food Services staff provided a spread fit for Royalty...and speaking of Royalty...earlier in the week, students all voted for their choices for King and Queen in each of the age groups: High School, Middle School, and Elementary School. The high point of the evening's activities was the crowning of the Kings and Queens; High School: Dexter Booker-Snead & LaQuinda Clark-



Kenny Gore, LaNesha Edwards, and Shaquita Campbell dancing

Woodward; Middle School: Aurora Claiborne and Lenny Whitlow; Elementary: LaPrecious Porter and Tommy Adams (not pictured). The Sweetheart Ball is held annually, sponsored by the Student Life Department. Sweetheart Ball Committee Members, as well as Education members and other volunteers, worked together to make this event a memorable one.



LaPrecious Porter, Lenny Whitlow, Aurora Claiborne, LaQuinda Clark-Woodward, & Dexter Booker-Snead

Getting Ready to Graduate

Mrs. Melanie Paul's secondary students, six of whom plan to graduate this year, have been actively involved in learning Daily Living Skills which will foster independence after graduation.

Students are learning about securing a first apartment, furnishing it, budgeting, bill-paying, and keeping a checkbook. They are also learning simple cooking skills, self-advocacy, how to secure an interpreter, use of various communication systems, and how to get police or legal assistance in their communities. In addition, The students continue to participate in CBI (Community Based Instructions) trips related to instructional areas.

On January 29th, the CBI trip consisted of learning how to secure adequate housing. They visited three different apartment complexes in Hampton. Each complex was considered based on the cost of the apartment, the location, (was it close to transportation, shopping, etc.), and the additional amenities each apartment offered. For lunch, the students ordered their own lunches from a menu at Jason's Deli. Upon returning to class, students completed work-

sheets and discussed why they preferred particular apartments.

On February 29th, our class went on a CBI trip to three different shopping complexes for furniture and household items. The stores' sales items were classified by price. Each student was given a mock checkbook and \$3,000 "dollars" to "spend" on items they need to furnish a FIRST apartment. Students wrote checks for each item they wanted to buy, and then deducted the cost from their \$3,000 budget. Prior to this CBI trip, students designed their own three-room, one-bath apartment with photos of furnishings and household items cut out from catalogues and newspaper flyers. They also budgeted the costs of these items.

On March 27th, our class will go on our third CBI trip. This time we're off to the Hampton Police Department, where students will be instructed in personal safety, how to avoid dangerous situations and what to do if they need police assis-

tance. After this one-hour lecture, we will walk across to the Hampton City Hall to take a tour of various departments.

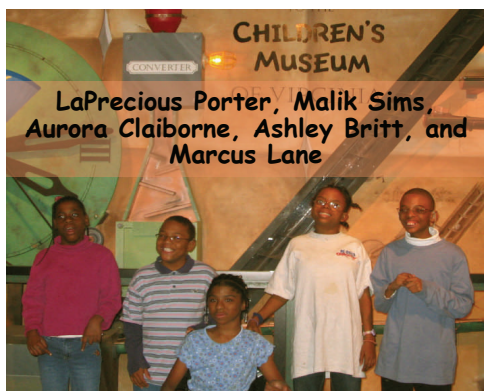
The students will understand where they need to go when securing assistance within their own cities and understand that each city has the same offices/departments. Students have been instructed in proper procedure to secure a Sign Language Interpreter for all doctor appointments, job interviews, police situations and other legal situations.

We will continue to go on CBI trips throughout the semester, so stay tuned for more exciting news...

Dexter Booker-Snead, Jennifer McLaughlin, Brenda Harper, Jessica Jones, Kevin Stith, Ciara Brockmeyer, Shaquita Campbell, Melanie Paul, Sherrod Crawley, Kenny Gore, LeNesha Edwards, Lauren Goid



Field Trip Report: Portsmouth Children's Museum

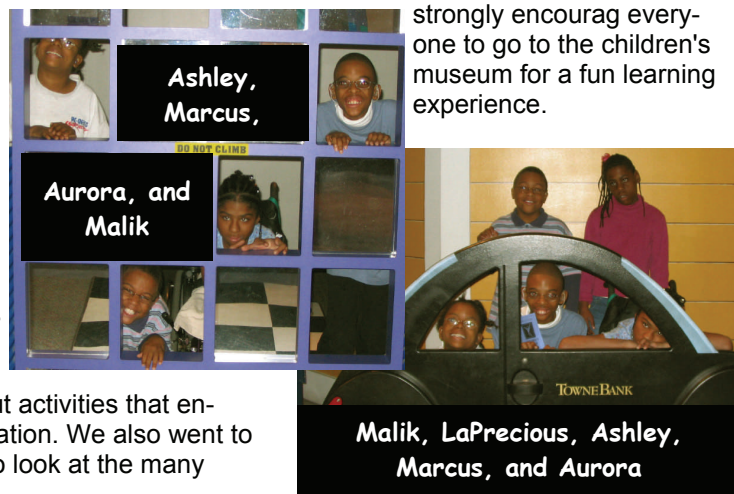


Ms. Machowski's class went on a field trip to the Children's Museum in Portsmouth on December 19, 2006. We explored, wondered, imagined and learned a lot during our visit to the children's museum. We explored exhibits

about transportation, motions, a grocery store, various games and lots of fun activities. It was a great learning exercise for the students to use their vocabulary and language skills to identify the objects at the museum and relate them to real life experiences. My students, two paraprofessionals and I especially enjoyed looking and learning about activities that encouraged participation. We also went to the library room to look at the many

new books they offer for free. The students really enjoyed picking one free book to take home with them. We

strongly encourage everyone to go to the children's museum for a fun learning experience.

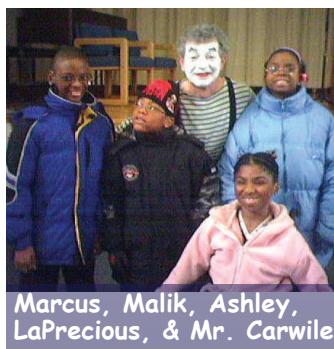


A Note from Interpreter Services

VSDBMH Deaf Activities committee worked in conjunction with the Education and Student Life Departments in providing culturally-rich events in January and February. Beginning in January, the Student Life Department hosted the "Silent Games Nights" during which participants communicated in ASL and played various team games and board games. On February 20, this event was opened to the community and we were joined by several VSDBMH alumni for a night of fun! Also, in celebration of Black History Month, the Student Life Department hosted a night of storytelling by former faculty and alumni who shared the rich history of our school. Did you know that our school was once a working farm with training in horticulture and animal husbandry? This was one of the many facts we learned from our storytellers.

The Education Department was busy as well during the month of February. On February 7, we were treated to an interpreted performance of "Oh, Freedom!" by the Virginia Opera. This musical tribute to the struggle of African-Americans from slavery through the Civil Rights movement was educational and enlightening. The costumes, scenery and

stage acting supported by interpretation into ASL provided a visual feast for our Deaf students and staff. Then on February 26, we were treated to a performance by world-renown Deaf mime, Billy Carwile. Mr. Carwile met younger Deaf students from VSDBMH and a local public school briefly before the performance to acclimate them to the appearance of a mime and ease any fears they might have. Then he performed a 45-minute show open to the public. During the afternoon, Mr. Carwile met with our Deaf high school students and provided a workshop on mime techniques as well as a presentation on ADA Law and Deaf Advocacy.



Deaf Culture Trivia: Gallaudet University has had a football team for many years. Long ago, it became evident that other teams were carefully watching them communicate in ASL between plays in order to deci-

pher their strategy. How did the Deaf players respond? They created the football huddle!

American Sign Language (ASL) Use: The term "ex" in English is used almost exclusively to describe a former spouse. But, in ASL it performs the function of describing past states of being. For example, used in conjunction with "teacher" it would be mean "former teacher"; with back pain, "used to have back problems." Just remember that ASL and English are linguistically different! If you struggle with understanding a concept in ASL, just ask your Deaf colleagues – they will help clarify it for you!

Hints for Accommodations: Deaf individuals are highly visual, so in planning an event or program, imagine experiencing it without hearing or try wearing earplugs at an event. If the event seems uninteresting or irrelevant to you, then it probably is not appropriate for the general population of Deaf individuals. Think "outside the box" in terms of creating activities that provide visual access and entertainment. Interpreting is never a substitute for direct communication, visual access, and participation.



Medical Alert: Spring Brings the Allergies



Dates to Remember

-  March 12– Movie Night at Kiln Creek Theater
-  March 14– Play: Ferguson Center
-  March 21– Multicultural Activity
-  April 2–9– Spring Holiday
-  April 20– Teacher Work-day

Allergy: (ăl'ər-jē) n. *a harmful, increased susceptibility to a specific substance.*

Common Allergens: Weeds, Pollen, Grasses, Trees, Mold, Indoor and Outdoor.

Allergies vs. Cold	Allergies	Cold
Symptoms	Runny or stuffed nose, sneezing, wheezing, watery and itchy eyes.	Can include fever, aches & pains along with allergy symptoms
Warning Time	Symptoms begin almost immediately after exposure to allergens	Usually takes a few days to hit full-force
Duration	Symptoms continue as long as you're exposed & beyond.	Symptoms should clear up within several days to a week.

Treatment may include avoidance of the allergen if possible, skin testing to determine the exact source of the allergy, allergy shots & medication. Medications are available over-the-counter & by prescription. Typical medications include:

Antihistamines: Block histamine– a substance produced by the body during an allergic reaction. Some antihistamines cause drowsiness, although newer ones don't.

Decongestants: Work by narrowing blood vessels, leading to the clearing of nasal congestion.

Bronchodilators: Work by opening bronchial tubes (in the lungs) to relieve coughing, wheezing, & shortness of breath.

Anti-Inflammatory Agents: Work by reducing inflammation of the airways.

Contact your physician or pharmacist to assist with choosing the right medication



Music to our ears

We ended 2006 with a fun winter holiday program in which many students played instruments, sang, or signed along with songs. On February 7th, all of the students in grades 3-12 went to the Harrison Opera House to see a production of "Oh, Freedom!" This "musical journey through history beginning with the African slave trade and ending with the civil rights movement of the 1960s" was enjoyed by all of our students and staff. Our two interpreters, Karen King and Becky Cyphers, helped bring

the dialog and lyrics to life for our deaf students, and they even received a round of applause from the entire audience!

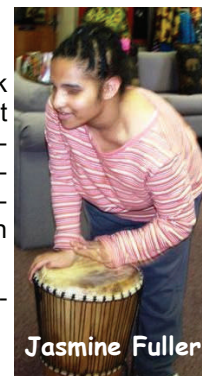
Students continue to make progress on their various music therapy goals as we begin the New Year. For example, one student is learning to sign "yes," another is working to decrease tactile defensiveness, and several others are working on self-expression through making choices and participating in basic song-writing.

For Black History Month, students actively participated in music programs

centered on some of the many musical forms that African-Americans have invented over the years.

Next month, we look forward to another visit from the Virginia Opera, who will be performing "The New Adventures of Alice in Opera Land."

- Julie Shields, M.T.-B.C.



Jasmine Fuller

Congratulations to instructor Melanie A. Paul and her



Sheltie, Shiloh, for receiving the Jefferson Award from WAVY TV 10 in October 2006. The Jefferson Award was founded in 1973 to honor the highest ideals and achievements in the public service field. The award recognizes dedication, sacrifice and accomplishments of individuals serving their community. Melanie and Shiloh received recognition for their work in establishing pet therapy programs at several area health care facilities and two area libraries where she began the Paws To Read Children's Literacy program. Melanie and her certified dog, Shiloh, have been doing pet therapy for 8 years.

In Other News...

Ms. Gates' class has been studying a unit about aquatic animals. Children in her class dissected fish to learn about biology first-hand. They studied the anatomical placement and function of fish gills, tail, brain, liver, stomach, bladder, and more.

Dora Kearney

